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COLUMBUS WOMAN SENTENCED TO 230 MONTHS IN PRISON FOR CARJACKING CABLE COMPANY VAN AND SHOOTING THE DRIVER

COLUMBUS – Latosha N. Mathis, aka Shahanna Byrd, age 34, of Columbus, was sentenced in United States District Court here today to 230 months imprisonment for carjacking a cable technician's van and shooting the driver when he tried to escape.

Gregory G. Lockhart, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio, Keith L. Bennett, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and Columbus Police Chief James G. Jackson announced the sentence handed down today by Senior United States District Judge John D. Holschuh.

On December 4, 2007, Mathis approached a cable television company technician who was sitting in his company's van in a parking lot on the north side of Columbus, pointed a gun at him, forced her way into the driver's seat of the van and began driving.

Mathis demanded money, took the technician's wallet, then demanded to know where the technician lived. When he told Mathis that he had no money at his house, Mathis fired a round into the floorboard of the van.

The technician jumped from the moving vehicle in an effort to escape and Mathis shot him, striking him in his back. Police found the abandoned van later at a nearby apartment complex.

Investigators tracked down Mathis through the victim's cell phone, which Mathis had continued to use. Members of the Columbus FBI Violent Crime Task Force arrested Mathis at her apartment on December 5, 2007, recovering the victim's cell phone and wallet. She has been in custody since her arrest.

Mathis pleaded guilty on June 24, 2008 to one count of carjacking and one count of use of a firearm during a crime of violence.

Lockhart commended the cooperative investigation by Columbus Police officers and members of the Violent Crime Task Force, and Assistant U.S. Attorney David M. Devillers, who prosecuted the case.

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